

REMARKS

The present amendment is in response to the Office action dated April 6, 2007 where the Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12-15, 17-20, 22-26, 30-32, 35, 45-51, and 53-55, and indicated that claims 10, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 56 would be allowable if rewritten independently. It is noted that the status of claims 4, 7, 11, 16, 21, 28, 29, 33, 34, 38, 39, 42-44, and 52 is not indicated in the Office Action summary, nor does the Examiner comment on these claims in the Detailed Action. It is possible that these claims have been withdrawn from consideration following the response to the election requirement filed on November 20, 2006, although this was not indicated on the Office Action summary.

Following this amendment, claims 2 to 8, 10 to 44, 46 to 50, and 56 are pending with allowable claims 10, 36, 40, 41, and 56 being the independent claims. Claims 1, 9, 45, and 51 to 55 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 2 to 8, 10 to 44, 46 to 50, and 56 in view of the amendments and the following remarks are respectfully requested.

Information Disclosure Statements

It is noted that the Examiner has not acknowledged receipt of the first Information Disclosure Statement which was filed in February 2004 in this application, nor the supplemental Information Disclosure Statement which was filed on November 20, 2006 together with the response to the election requirement. The Examiner has also not indicated whether he has considered the references cited in those Information Disclosure Statements. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner indicates the status of the two Information Disclosure Statements filed in this application and makes the references cited in those Information Disclosure Statements of record in the next communication issued in connection with this application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 10, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 56. In the foregoing amendment, claims 10, 36, 40, 41, and 56 have been rewritten as independent claims. Claim 10 now includes the subject matter of canceled claims 1 and 9, claims 36, 40, and 41 now include the subject matter of canceled claim 1 and of claim 35, and claim 56 now includes the subject matter of canceled claims 45, 51, and 53. It is therefore submitted that claims 10, 36, 40, 41, and 56 should now be allowable, along with claims 2 to 8, 11 to 35, 39,

43, and 44 which have been amended to depend from allowable claim 10, claims 37, 38, and 42 which depend from allowable claim 36, and claims 46 to 50 which have been amended to depend from allowable claim 56.

It is believed that claims 2 to 8, 10 to 44, 46 to 50, and 56 are now in condition in all respects for allowance, and early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the foregoing amendment deals with all outstanding grounds of rejection, and that claims 2 to 8, 10 to 44, 46 to 50, and 56, all claims remaining in this application following this amendment, are now in condition in all respects for allowance. Early notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments regarding the above Amendments and Remarks or believes that a telephone conversation may be useful in advancing prosecution, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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